

*Abstract of the Disclosure*

[0091] A practical realization for achieving and maintaining high-efficiency  
5 transfer of light from input and output free-space optics to a high-index waveguide of  
sub-micron thickness is described. The required optical elements and methods of  
fabricating, aligning, and assembling these elements are discussed. Maintaining high  
coupling efficiency reliably over realistic ranges of device operating parameters is  
discussed in the context of the preferred embodiments.